1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

> migration of souls. Too often it has come about that the *Ibos* of a given plantation have agreed all to hang themselves, in order to return to their country."

So well recognized was this tendency of the Ibo slaves to commit suicide, that they were described in Créole by the formula: "*Ibos pend' cor' a yo* — The Ibos (are those who) hang themselves." None the less, many slaves from this tribe were acquired. Their strong communal and tribal ties made it advantageous for those who owned them to obtain more of them, since newcomers "were accorded help, care, and instruction by those who had preceded them."

According to St. Mery, the Negroes most common in the colony came from the Congo coast and Angola, and were known by the generic term *Congos*. The *Franc-Congos*, who came from the kingdoms of Congo and Angola, were

> "of a docility and gayety that makes them much desired. Loving song, dance, and ornaments, they make excellent domestics, while their intelligence, their facility in speaking a pure Créole, their jovial countenances without markings . . . cause people to prefer them for house-servants; they also make good laborers and good fishermen."

That the large numbers of Congo Negroes imported into Haiti have left no more of the elements of their culture in the island than are found is perhaps due to this very devotion to their masters, for a lively tradition of the present tells how, during the slave revolts, the Congo Negroes most often remained on the side of their masters and most often betrayed their fellows.

Not all the Negroes from the Congo area were as amiable as these just mentioned. The *Mondongos* had "the most execrable excess of eating their fellows." This quotation gains special significance because of the prominence which it has

1; Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

stationed near by did not at first believe in this miracle, until after several appearances of the saint the higher authorities of the Church gave the fête their sanction. Many tales are recounted of skeptics who, though coming to scoff, became filled with awe when they put foot in the holy place and — significantly for the merging of the two religions — were possessed by *loa* for the first time. A church which has since burned and a small chapel were erected at the site which now is the entrance to the enclosure before the present church. This is the old calvary enlarged, and here the statue of the Virgin, saved when the earlier church burned, is found. Next to this church are the uncompleted walls of the structure which is to be a new and larger church. It is said, however, that this edifice has given much trouble, for each time the walls reach a certain height they fall. The people say: "The Virgin does not like this place," and believe that a simpler church should be built where the old one stood.

The vision of the Virgin at En bas Palmes is believed to have occurred several times, most recently as placed by a lively tradition in the days of the American Marine occupation, when a priest is said to have caused both St. John and En bas Palmes to be closed for several years because, as at present, many who prayed at the church also took occasion to worship their *loa*.

During the fête, however, the tale goes, the Virgin appeared on a palm tree. The people, on their knees worshipping, sent to the priest to come and pray. He declared it merely superstition, however, and called an American Marine captain stationed at Mirebalais to help him suppress this worship. The captain ordered a Haitian sergeant to shoot the vision, but the Virgin merely moved to another tree; another shot, and she moved again. They cut down the tree, and those who looked on with terror saw the vision slowly ascend to the sky. As the priest

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

turned to leave, word came that his house had burned and nothing in it was saved. Later he suffered a paralytic stroke from which he never recovered. Some say that the American captain became ill and was sent to the States "as a punishment for what he had done." Several days later the sergeant was found mad, wandering in the woods. Since he had fired under orders, however, his punishment was but temporary, and on being cured he returned to Ville-Bonheur to ask pardon of the Virgin. Today he lives in Mirebalais. When they saw the American ill, the priest paralyzed, the sergeant mad, and the presbytery burned, "public clamor" became so strong that both St. John and En bas Palmes were reopened.[11]

In 1932 a cyclone at St. John tore down trees and houses and hurt but did not kill the worshippers who had gathered there. An eyewitness insisted he had seen the enormous whirling cloud rise from the sacred place. He had no time to reach his house, for with a noise like a cannon-shot the whirlwind came, and an enormous oak tree fell just behind him — "I saw death staring at me." Today he carries two scapularies to the Virgin to protect him.

The third sacred spot is at the falls themselves, where the grandeur and beauty of the scene is such as to induce the religious thrill almost unaided, and where great numbers go in the course of their pilgrimage to Ville-Bonheur. There are two falls, situated at a distance of several miles from the village, one for Damballa and one for Aida Wedo, and it is believed that those who bathe in the sacred streams become possessed. It is said that the palms near by are sacred to the Virgin, but others hold that they are for Damballa. Many visit the falls on the day preceding the fête, but the largest throng hurries there immediately after the principal mass, when the greatest number of possessions and the most violent seizures by the *loa* occur. The falls, therefore, in association

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

He was the center of all eyes. Most of the time he danced alone, gyrating recklessly. Sometimes he danced with his houngénicon. Those who watched clapped hands and uttered sounds imitating drums, for drums were not being used in this service. The houngan carried the inevitable *clochette*, or tiny hand bell.

When newcomers arrived, Gèdé greeted them by shaking both their hands downward, vigorously, three times. Then he wiped their faces with his kerchief, a ceremony which he repeated from time to time. He [535] danced with each of them a kind of Jenvalo step, simple, restrained, and dignified. One of the visitors fell to his knees to converse with him.

The entire evening was built around the houngan's representation of Gèdé. Properly speaking, the houngan was not in a trance. He was in full possession of all his normal faculties and was conscious of the slightest inconveniences and disturbances. Several times the clay bowl of his pipe fell from the reed stem, scattering hot ashes on the ground, and each time he paused to allow the houngénicon to clear them away. Yet he was carried away by his certainty that he was Gèdé. The obvious conviction of those who watched seemed to fortify him in his role. As the evening wore on, he became more and more detached from his normal personality. His psychic condition was not that of one who had been "mounted" by a loa; it was, rather, a continuously progressive ecstasy.

Gèdé is, in fact, more than a loa of the cemetery; he is a personification of death in all its macabre, humorous, and unpredictable aspects. Death is not merely a thing dying; it is an entity, a positive force in nature. Death is Gèdé Nimbo. I believe that when the houngan became Gèdé, all who had crowded into his hut felt themselves to be in the presence of death itself. Death, a dynamic, aggressive force, danced and pirouetted among them, talking the language of the dead and of old Africa.

Gèdé is often stern, austere, and forbidding, but he has other aspects. Haitians take amused pleasure at the terror he can strike into the hearts of the mighty. An old Gèdé song goes:

[539]

Papa Gèdé bel ga'çon!
Papa Gèdé bel ga'çon!
L'habillé tout en noi'!
Pou'l monté au palais!

Papa Gèdé is a handsome fellow!
Papa Gèdé is a handsome fellow!
He is dressed all in black
For he is going up to the palace!

L'habillé tout en blanc
Li semblé yun deputé!
L'habillé tout en noi'!
Li semblé yun senateur!

When he's dressed all in white
He looks like a deputy!
When he's dressed all in black
He resembles a senator!

According to tradition, the song had its origin in a march on the capital by some houngans many years ago. The story is very old and no one remembers many of the details.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

If it should happen that on the appointed day four years later the family is unable to hold the regular feast for Grand Bois, the grand famille goes to the tree sacred to the loa, with a bottle of *siro'* and other token gifts. He explains the difficulties of the family; he tells the loa that it has been a bad year, that the crops have been poor, and that the family has not been able to accumulate enough money to buy sacrificial animals. He asks Grand Bois for a six-month postponement. The loa agrees to the postponement, making his intentions clear through various signs when the grand famille is possessed. "Grand Bois is a good loa," people say, "but if you fail to meet your obligations to him he will be very stern. If you don't keep your promise to him, he may seize you [i.e., kill you]."

When the rites for Mait' Grand Bois are finished, services for Ogoun and the Dahomé deities may be held, beginning on Friday and running through the week end. The Ogoun service is a festive affair. There is much singing and dancing, and early on Saturday morning the sacrificial bull is dressed and decorated with red and blue kerchiefs. Red and blue ribbons are tied to his horns, and he is led on a grand tour to various places, including Ogoun's tree. The drummers walk behind him, and after them members of the family, some dancing, some singing, and some mounted by the loa Ogoun. The procession passes three times around the cemetery, then heads back toward the family *habitation*. When the participants reach the tree sacred to Legba, they sing to this loa, invoking him to "ouvri bayè pou' moin" (open the gate for me). Finally, when the procession reaches the *habitation*, the sacrificial bull is killed. After Ogoun has been served his mangé, the rites are terminated with an *action de grâce*.

Near Anse-à-Veau there is a dried-up spring. It is said that many years ago during a big service for Mait' Grand Bois a man mounted by this loa rushed to the foot of a large tree and began clawing at the ground. He dug a hole there with his hands, and when it was only a few feet deep, water began to flow. The members of the société later enlarged the hole and lined it with stone. It was discovered that a giant crab was living in this water. One year, a service to Mait' Grand Bois was missed. The crab disappeared from the spring, and soon the water stopped flowing. "Grand Bois gives," the people say, "but if he is not remembered he also takes back."

Possession by the Loa Pinga Maza

On the outskirts of Port-au-Prince there is a hounfor dedicated to the loa Pinga Maza, also known by the name Bakulu Baka. He is a ferocious and fearsome spirit of the Pétro family who is known for his propensity

[P.148]

13. Comments on the Mighty: Political Songs

The African-style song of social criticism has found no worthier subjects than the historic political figures of Haiti. There is no doubt that the African slaves used this art form to express their feelings toward the white masters as they had used it to comment upon the behavior of their own chiefs and fellow tribesmen. The worthy leaders were praised in song; the unworthy were castigated and their sins, failures, and social misdemeanors publicized in folk songs. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, slavery had come to an end in Haiti. The deep democratic sense of human dignity had outlasted the colonial masters and emerged tempered and sharp. The songs of criticism became not only comments upon political figures but campaign propaganda as well. They dwelt upon the accomplishments or faults of the candidates for political office. Friendly songs sought out every virtue, and invented others, in the man or woman being praised. Unfriendly songs lashed out and lacerated or poked biting fun at the subject, not even sparing his physical deformities.

Yet the political songs are more than statements of merit or fault. Cumulatively they are a kind of folk history of Haiti. No political aspirant ever went unsung by his peasant army, or unridiculed by his opponent's followers. The songs the people sang about their heroes and their enemies recall events and details that formal history has forgotten or ignored. The memory of the folk song is powerful and long. Some of the recollections go back more than a century.

History books tell us that in December, 1843, Major Charles Hérard aîné Rivière was elected to the office of the presidency, and that a new constitution was drawn up by the Constituent Assembly. The new constitution was an accomplishment of the liberal and democratic forces of the nation. It guaranteed certain civil rights to the people. It provided that judges be elected instead of appointed, abolished life terms for

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

For some time the President, who was sixty-nine years old, had not been in good health, and disregarding the friendly warning of those who were interested in his welfare he refused to give up his hard work and to take the rest of which he was in sore need. Against the advice of his doctor he decided to undertake a long journey to Jacmel. He started on the 24th of March, 1896, at three o'clock in the morning, but before he even had time to leave Port-au-Prince, he fell from his horse dead in a fit of apoplexy, at a short distance from the executive mansion.[1]

The legend of Hippolyte's death passed on in song is not nearly so dispassionate. It is told that Hippolyte was going out on a drastic punitive trip to Jacmel, where there were rumblings of political opposition and revolution. Among other things, the President was going to seize the powerful Vodoun priest Mérisier, regarded as a powerful force in the opposition. Hippolyte also had sworn to reduce Jacmel to ashes and wipe out the entire population except one male and one female to repopulate the land. As he prepared to leave on his mission, his wife and his son stood by the door to see him off.

Li lévé Mardi bon matin, Li fai sélé cheval à li. En montant sa cheval li, Panama li sorti tombé.	He arose early on Tuesday morning, He saddled his horse. As he climbed on his horse, His hat came off and fell.
L'Hérison rélé "Papa," Li dit'l, "Papa à moin, Panama ou sorti tombé, Cé déjà youn mauvais signal."	L'Hérison * called out, "Papa!" He said to him, "Father, Your hat has come off and fallen. That is already a bad omen."
Li répond ni, "Pitit à moin, Moin déjà met' l'armée déhors, L'armée moin déjà nan portaille. Y faudra que moin parti."	He replied to him, "My child, I have already sent the army ahead, My army is already at the city gate, I have to go."
Arrivé sou Pont Gentil, Li tombé sani connaisance. Yo voyé rélé Doctor Jules, "Vin sauver Florvil Gélin!"	Arrived at Pont Gentil, He fell unconscious. They sent for Dr. Jules, "Come to save Florvil Gélin."
Doctor Jules tomba à genoux. Li rélé Manman Ste Anne, Li rélé St. Augustin, "Vine sauver Florvil Gélin!"	Dr. Jules fell on his knees. He called Mother St. Anne, He called St. Augustin, "Come to save Florvil Gélin!"
Ste Anne dit, "'i faut mouri." St. Augustin dit, "'i faut mouri." Li rélé St. Jacques Majeur "Vine sauver Florvil Gélin!"	St. Anne said, "He has to die." St. Augustin said, "He has to die." He called St. Jacques Majeur, "Come to save Florvil Gélin."

* Hippolyte's son.

[1] (Léger, Haiti, Her History and Her Detractors. Cf P. 353, Category 116. -- Analyst)

2: Courlander B-8 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

*533 Mérisier rété Jacmel,
*539 Li souqué baksor à li.
173 Li conné ça qui gainyain.
643 Tout ti trou déjà bouché!

Mérisier waited at Jacmel.
He shook his sacred rattle.
He knew what was going on.
All the small holes were filled.*

Victoire dit con ça,
Quand Florvil ta va mourit
Li tap fai youn belle soirée
Avec tout ti gens la yo.

Victoire said
When Florvil dies
She will hold a beautiful party
With all the young people

CHORUS

En allé Dodo!
En allé Dodo!
En allé ce soir
Caille la belle Victoire!

CHORUS

We are going to dance! †
We are going to dance!
We are going this evening
To the house of beautiful Victoire! ‡

The legend of Hippolyte's falling hat is preserved in another folk song called "Panama'm Tombé":

Panama'm tombé,
Panama'm tombé,
Panama'm tombé; ça qui dèyè
Ramassé li ba moin!

My hat fell down,
My hat fell down,
My hat fell down; whoever is behind,
Pick it up for me!

*533 Mérisier, the Vodoun priest whom Hippolyte regarded as an enemy,
*539 was not pleased with the rumors and talk about him that was going the
173 rounds in the capital. His displeasure is recorded in a protest song with
643 a familiar theme:
1193

Mérisier yo vini ga'dé moin pou' y'allé pa'lé, wo wa é!
Mérisier yo vini ga'dé ça pou' y'allé pa'lé ça!
Kénan moin yo wè!
Kénan yo séré nan mal!
Mérisier pas là, sonné ochan wa wa é!

Mérisier [says] they come to see me to go away and talk, *wo wa é!*
Mérisier [says] they come to see it and go away to talk about it!
What is mine you see!
What is yours you evilly hide!
Mérisier isn't there, sound the salute, *wa wa é!*

173 Seven days after Hippolyte's death, General Simon Sam was elected
643 to the presidency. His friends and his enemies had different things to say
*533 about him. One song makes a tart comment on Sam's administration.
*539

* That is, the affair was finished.
† *Allé dodo* literally means "to go to sleep," but there was a dance called Allé Dodo.
‡ Hippolyte's young wife.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1958) 1960 8V3 Haiti 8V3

A la youn président,
C'est Tirésius Augustin Simon Sam.
Si tout té con ça,
Haiti ta finil [Ex. 111]

There was a president,
He was Tirésius Augustin Simon Sam.
If they were all like him,
Haiti would be finished!

In 1902 General Nord Alexis became the chief executive of Haiti. His abilities and accomplishments are still being debated, but he appears to have been a rather lovable old man whom everyone called by the affectionate term Uncle. His administration was fairly stable and prosperous—as prosperity is known in Haiti—and in large measure peaceful. When his election was confirmed, the people were convinced that the nation was in for a period of law and order, and that the constant threat of cacos and brigandage would come to an end. One of the election-year songs goes:

Nous crions vive, c'est pou' l'armé du Nord!
Tintin cila ça va finil
Nous crions vive, c'est pou' soldats du Nord!
Tintin cila ça va finil
Tintin cila, tintin cila, tintin cila va finil
Bassin Vodoun, Bassin Vodoun, Bassin Vodoun c'est pou' nous! [Ex. 112]

We cry long live Nord's army!
The chaos will be ended!
We cry long live Nord's soldiers!
The chaos will be ended!
The chaos, the chaos, the chaos will be ended!
Bassin Vodoun,* Bassin Vodoun, Bassin Vodoun is for us!

One of the serious problems confronting Nord Alexis after his election was that of a disappearing national currency. Haitian paper money was circulating elsewhere in the West Indies and in South America and was becoming increasingly scarce in Haiti itself. Nord Alexis called in all the old currency and issued new, with the happy result that large quantities of money were again seen in the Republic. The common people who made the songs seem to have been very grateful:

Alexis Nord Papa ou bon chef oh!
Ou ba nous moné, ou ba nous papier!
Alexis Nord Papa ou bon chef oh!
Ou ba nous moné, ou ba nous papier!

* Probably a place name.

2. Courlander 8-5 (1937-1965) 1966 SV2 Hait SV2

[P.166]

15. Secret-Society Songs

575 171 Secret societies were once common in Haiti, as they were in other parts of the New World where West Africans settled in large numbers. The institution of the secret society was strong in various parts of West Africa from which the slaves came. The tradition was particularly notable among the tribes of Nigeria. In the New World it offered to slaves and to freed Negroes an opportunity for social organization and fraternal relationships which otherwise had been pretty well shattered by the nature of slavery and the profuse admixture of cultures. A number of elderly Haitians have [648] suggested that it was the Haitian secret societies rather than the Vodoun and Congo cults which fomented underground resistance and slave revolts against the French in the last years of the eighteenth century.

174 178 576 [476] At this late date it is difficult to reconstruct much of the secret-society picture. Such groups as may have survived until recently did so in vitiated and changed form. They have been supplanted in large measure by the *société*, a kind of mutual-aid association with both economic and recreational functions. It is exclusive, but not irrevocably so, and it is not secret. The société often corresponds roughly with the membership of a hounfor, or cult temple.

575 178 266 173 Old people still talk about true secret societies, however. There was a Moundongue secret society, separate from the Moundongue cult, whose members were recruited from the survivors of the Moundongue tribe and their descendants. Other secret societies were not based on tribal affiliation but were recruited from the population at large. One such group was the Vinbindingue, also known as the Blinbindingue and the Balbindingue. Its practices were feared. According to tradition, the Vinbindingue was predatory and held cannibalistic rites, as did other groups such as the Moundongue Society, the Cochon Rouge (the Red Pig Society), the Zeaubeaups, the Cochon Gris (the Gray Pig Society), and the Calinda 000 Society. How much of their reputation for cannibalism was deserved is

[Herskovits, Dahomey, I P. 256. Cf. P. 353, Category 116. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-6 (1877-1944) 1968 8V3 Hait 8V3

How much of their reputation for cannibalism was deserved is a matter of speculation. Bizarre tales told by the colonists, as well as rumors and legends propagated about the societies by nonmembers who feared them, did result in a body of folklore which portrays these groups as malevolent. The societies themselves, no doubt, often supported such beliefs to increase the awe in which they were held.

In modern Haiti, however, there is no secret or fraternal society of the kind that probably existed in prerevolutionary days. Nor is there anything comparable to the Abakwa, or Carabali, an Ibo secret society that has survived in Cuba.[2]

Curiously enough, the most significant noncult organization in Haiti today is the Masonic order. Yet it has not remained distinct from the cults but has become interwoven with them. Many Vodoun and Congo services have rites or dances that are designated as Mazonne (Masonic). Houngans often feel that affiliation with the Masonic order offers distinction and prestige for the hounfor that the ordinary cult center does not have.

As for the Calinda, the Cochon Rouge, the Cochon Gris, the Zeaubeaup, the Vinbindingue, and the Moundongue societies, they appear to survive in name rather than in fact. The rumors and tales go on, as they do about zombies, devils and lou-garos. It is mostly at carnival time that their names are heard. A Mardi Gras band, appropriately costumed, may herald itself as a Calinda or a Cochon Rouge group. It will sing songs it regards as appropriate to the kind of effect it is trying to achieve. Such groups are not taken seriously. They are merely part of the carnival fun. But to members of older generations they do recall tales about the secret societies that met under the limbs of the mapou tree by torchlight to conduct their nocturnal affairs.

The songs that follow are reputed to belong to the Calinda, Vinbindingue, and Zeaubeaup societies; but they are infected with a frivolous quality which suggests they may have been heard for the first time in the carnival celebration rather than in the dark shadows of the mapou.

One of the legends concerning the Balbindingue, or Vinbindingue, is that of the dancing drum. The theme is a special one, but it is related to other stories about dancing calabashes in the Calbasse ritual and about dancing hoes. This song describes a gathering at such a dance:

Balbindingue!
C'est là n'homme mwé yé!
Cimitière manmzel
Balbindingue!
C'est yun seul tambour qui danse!
Pardon mon plot!
Balbindingue!
C'est là n'homme mwé yé! [Ex. 124]

2. [See Courlander "Abakwa Meeting in Guanabacoa," Journal of Negro History, XXIX (1944), 461ff. Cf. Cat 116, P. 353. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander 9-5 (1937-1968) 1969 SV3 Haiti SV3

[The Congo and Pétro Pantheons]

Wangol. (King of Angola). He also appears in other rites.

Yaoundé, or Mayaoundé. This name is a tribal designation, referring to the Mayaoundés of the Congo region.

Wangol. Dlaad (Wangol of the Water)

Moundongue. Often considered to be a "hard" loa. Ritual service to him includes, on special occasions, the cutting off of dogs' ears and tails. He is fond of dogs and is benevolent toward them. The name derives from that of a tribe of the upper Congo region.

Ti Moundongue. Said to be a "little" of Moundongue.

Moundongue Mondaille. A member of Moundongue's family.

Balaclou, or Bilalou. A loa identified with the morning star, also called Baiacou. There is also a town in Dahomey by this name.

Ganda, or Baganda, also called Nèg' Ganda. A deity taking the name of the Ganda people of Uganda.

Congo Yamendam. A benevolent loa associated with curing and protecting the sick. Certain curative medicine bundles are called *yamingous*.

Macaya Bumba, sometimes called Caya. He takes his name from the Bumba people of the upper Congo River region. The Bumbas are near neighbors of the Moundongues.

Manyo Bumba. One of the Bumba family.

Mariani Moundongue. One of the Moundongue family.

Roi Loango (King of Loango). Refers to the old African kingdom of that name.

Nanchoc. A warrior deity.

Avizánzé. Known primarily in northern Haiti.

Dan Pétro. A rather malevolent loa, from whom the Pétro cult takes its name. The mangé for Dan Pétro is a pig. Early observers speculated that Dan Pétro was originally a powerful houngan of prerevolutionary days.[33]

Ayida Pétro. A Pétro version of the Vodoun Ayida Wèdo.

Bakulu Baka, known in some regions by the name Pinga Maza. He is a malevolent spirit who "eats"—i.e., destroys—people. Some informants are inclined to believe that Bakulu and Pinga are separate loa, both of a variety akin to baka or démons.

Bakulu Barak. Related to Bakulu Baka.

Bambarra Taiba. He is visualized as a sea crab. *Taille bas* in Creole means "low hips" and is used to describe a dance posture. The surname Taiba therefore may describe the movements of this loa as he moves about like a crab.

Balaie Bilaba

Baron Général, or Général Baron. He is enormously large and ferocious in appearance. A special loa of the country people. Although stern, he is fond of children. He is symbolized as an owl; his home is in the chardonne tree. His physical description suggests that he may be a deification of the epic folklore character Brise Montagne, or Break Mountains.

Chemindevant

Congo Hagoue (Congo Red Eyes). A malevolent male spirit. Loa with red eyes are always of bad character.

Congo Mayombe, or Mayombe. A malevolent spirit.

Congo Savane, or Congo Zamon (Congo of the Plains). Malevolent, fierce, and

[33] [Saint-Méry, De la danse, p. 48. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 18.—Ed.]

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

712 the battlements far off across the tortuous mass of mountains and
[713] green valleys, admire the sheer strength of will which made His
Majesty's subjects bear four hundred cannon up the steep and rocky
path—not to mention thousands of cannon balls now rusting away
after a century of disuse, or the powder and shot which once filled
• [173] the magazines. It is said that five thousand soldiers could be housed
[703] in the fortress at once. If this is hyperbole, one hardly dare challenge
it, for the whole Citadel belittles the individual man. It is likewise
said that Christophe once made a battalion of soldiers march off the
cliff to their death merely to demonstrate his absolute control over
[766] them. Such stories grow up around His Black Majesty. He lies en-
tombed in his useless but still superb fortress—and lives in the
memory of the Northerners, one of whom said proudly: "We of the
North have a great heritage, and you will find that we are all
dominated by *une psychologie citadelienne*."

Dungeons, secret passages, royal apartments, separate rooms for each of the old Dutch, Spanish, French, and English cannon, some of them dating back to the seventeenth century—all the paraphernalia of the storybook fortress is present. From a bastion one gazes, as from an alp, for miles in any direction, and feels that La Ferrière is certainly one of the most impressive, and one of the most futile, edifices in the world. If the silent cannon had ever been fired, their balls would have rumbled harmlessly down the mountainside. The suspicion grows that Christophe achieved his architectural miracle not primarily as a defense against the French, but to make his subjects proud of what a nation of despised ex-slaves could accomplish.

344 Five miles away, at the foot of the mountain, is the village of
644 Milot, with the ruins of the palace of Sans Souci. Of yellow stone, it spreads out spaciously like a French château. Its rooms must have been magnificent. The palace is so situated that one may look out across the northern plains to the sea, or up the valleys to mountain peaks. In Sans Souci Christophe shot himself in 1820 when he knew that only *souci* would remain to him if he lived.

489 Transportation from one part of the country to another is far from
[496] easy. There are no railroads—unless one counts the short line running
north a few miles from Port-au-Prince to nowhere in particular, and
the equally short line coming west into Cap-Haitien from the fields
[491] of the northern plain. Roads built by the American Marines make
automobile travel between the main towns possible, if one does not